don't get too excited though, is just some ancient MIDI stuff

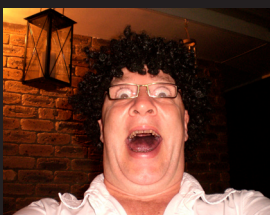# Developer listens to users, adds new feature:

u-he
news & stuff

MUSIKMESSE 2008 - Hall 5.1 A75

The practical guide to all news from u-he (short for Urs Heckmann), freely available as long as in stock!

FREE! PROMOTIONAL COPY

This man down-loads randomizer, uses it on every patch, claims "they do sound really different now!"

more about that feature on page 2!

U-HE announces major break through in both customer support and patch management: All new and updated u-he plugins will respond to good old MIDI Program Changes. This has been long awaited and some had already given up hope, but finally they celebrate a victory of common sense.

Patches have to reside in a special folder though to be available as MIDI Programs - surprisingly this folder is called *MIDI Programs*.

The feature has initially been spotted in a beta version for u-he flagship synthesizer Zebra, as seen on the internet. Reports have been positive despite the lack of support for MIDI Bank Select messages. "We'll continue to work this, the last word has yet to be spoken" says Urs.
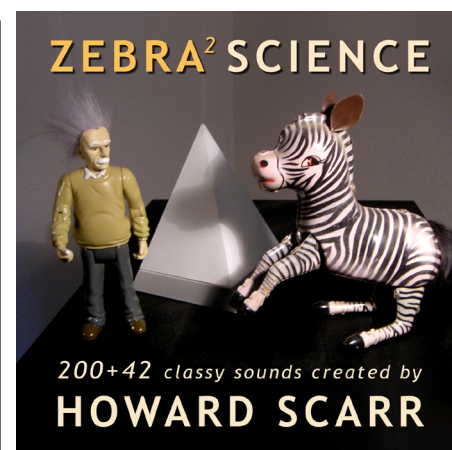
SHOCKING!!!
new t-shirts - crowds upset!

Powershock: u-he have updated their t-shirt design. The new style is "hilarious", says an anonymous source. Dipl.-Des. Urs Heckmann, designer of the new company t-shirts, was not yet available for comments. Alleged insiders say, the new design was chosen because the old one was too hard to read. The new design has only 3 letters and a dash, is easier to read.

Dankeschön!

The user manual for Zebra is now also available in French ("La grille sert à activer/désactiver des modules utilisés pour la synthèse sonore.") and Italian ("E' possibile usare un equalizzatore parametrico a 4 bande nella matrice degli effetti.") language. They can be downloaded in pdf format from the following link:

http://www.zebrasynth.com/manual

CAN HAS OTHER ONES BACK PLZ?!?

u-he

ZEBRA² SCIENCE

200+42 classy sounds created by
HOWARD SCARR

Zebra² Science - out in Spring 08 - www.zebrasynth.com

Welcome @ the GEEKZONE!

Have folks at u-he gone crazy? - We hope not! But what's cropping up on their website will certainly leave some in sheer disbelief, if not faint...

There's a new blog-style subpage at u-he.com, going by the seemingly harmless URL of
http://www.u-he.com/scripting
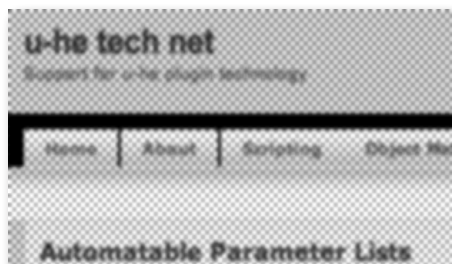
Under the moniker of "u-he tech net" curious people are presented with a lot of technical gibberish which makes some sense at a closer look: Various users have already created add-ons for u-he's products, such as modified user interfaces and even software that converts .wav files into Zebra2 wavetables.

This website now is aimed to help 3rd party developers with their efforts, which are basically divided in three categories:

GUI Skins: Help for people who want to create custom graphics, utilizing u-he's new skinning engine.

Patch Scripting: Assistance for u-he's Virtual Machine with which the plugin functionality can be extended, as seen here:

```
for ( int i = startParam; i < endParam; i++ )
{
  if ( Global.Parameter[ i ].type == fractionalType )
  {
    float range = Global.Parameter[i].max
                -Global.Parameter[i].min;
    int change = rand( -range, range );
    float value = Global.Parameter[ i ] + change;
    if ( value > Global.Parameter[ i ].max )
    {
      value = Global.Parameter[ i ].max;
    }
    if ( value < Global.Parameter[ i ].min )
    {
      value = Global.Parameter[ i ].min;
    }
    Global.Parameter[ i ] = value;
  }
}
```

What you see here is a Script that's embedded in a normal u-he patch file. This script is found in the infamous *Zufallstrans4mator* patch which is capable of randomizing *any* u-he plugin after 2006!

Parameter List: There's a new option in latest plugins to customize the parameter list and their names as seen by the host.

Urs Heckmann receiving the em 2008 Editors Choice award from Gino Robair, Editor

Awards Season!

Folks at U-HE are happy: Zebra 2.1 has been awarded with the 2008 Editors Choice award of Electronic Musician in the category for best synthesizer (software). Subsequently More Feedback Machine 2.0 has taken off in magazine reviews and also received not only good verdicts but also some awards such as Computer Music's "Performance" and "Price/Value" awards. Electronic Musician is rumoured to pick MFM2 for "Download Of The Month".

Naturally all awards are also on display on the respective product websites, but sometimes u-he simply doesn't know about them. In that case, please send an email!

UPDATES

Numerous updates are expected from u-he within the coming weeks and months. Let's have a look at the most important ones:

Filterscape 1.5 makes the promise of a major upgrade. Not only will the whole suite (Filterscape, FilterscapeQ6 and FilterscapeVA) be revamped with the latest technologies such as resizable GUI, skin support, MIDI Program Changes etc., but a long rumoured feature seems to gain shape: The *new SVF filter types* are supposed to be top notch, very rich sounding digital models. Months went into fine tuning these for extreme saturation levels, yet smooth operation. Another highlight will be the extended support for MIDI, such as the built-in keyboard control which not only responds to notes but also triggers all sorts of synced modulations. Yes, you can literally "play" EQ-bands from your MIDI keyboard.

Zebra 2.5 is up to inherit all the goodies that are visible in recent beta versions, as leaked on the internet. A new addition however is supposed to jump into the picture as well and create some extra vibe among fans: An all new *Zebrify* effects plugin brings Zebra on the effects channels of your DAW: All modules of Zebra gathered in a single "Grid" allow for spectacular mangling of audio input. This is possible by making the voice engine monophonic - which is appropriate for an effect plugin. Looking forward!

History Corner

u-he's booth at **Musikmesse 2007**: This must have been the sexiest stand in the whole corridor. Loads of animal patterns, a comfortable couch, cool visitors and a bunch of dinosaurs being threatened by a Zebra. We wonder, what will they do in 2008?

Above: Beer and smokes with Stephan and Niko
Below: A silent moment with only few lurkers, one sleeping on the sofa

Above: Hans Hafner's session "Zebra in contemporary film scores"
Below: Stephan, Thomas of Tasmodia, Howard

The International

u-he has sneaked in at post production facilities for Tom Tykwer's next movie, *The International*.

While drooling about Reinhold Heil's and Johnny Klimek's pile of Zebras and More Feedback Machines we could secretly watch pieces of the movie, featuring Naomi Watts (not in picture) and Clive Owen (bottom right, lurking behind Reinhold, watching Zebra).

Expect a detailed production report on u-he dot com once their work is finished!

Clive Owen (hidden), Reinhold Heil, Johnny Klimek

TRUE STORY

During our on-site visit at famous film-composer Hans Zimmer in Los Angeles we asked for a little statement. It came in an email and simply blew us away:

"Lieber Urs,

You wanted to know why I wanted to use mainly Zebra and no other plugin synth on "The Dark Knight Returns". Simple really. I don't believe that there is another software synth out there at the moment that has such a core sonic integrity as Zebra. On "Batman" I have a huge canvas to paint, we are in Imax that gives us tremendous sharpness and far more detail. Our playingfield sonically is many more channels and speakers than the average movie, we are very electronic in not only our music but our sound design. Zebra can handel all of this better then any soft synth out there. It has an analogue soul and a digital brain. It competes well with our other synths on this project (2 Moog 55s, Emu Modular, PPG `300 modular, CMS and Cwejman, Doepfer and Roland System 700, Buchla200e, 3 Mini Moogs and, from the last movie we did, the Virus TI). It can

go from normal but authentic analogue sound to truly unheard of things, it's easy to program and very CPU efficient. It's also very practical for us because every arranger and programmer can have his own version. It's not like in the past where we had to spend fortunes on Moogs to equip all the studios.

Before I start a project I try to have a concept of its sound in mind. Which hall - which country - which microphones. If it's orchestral, I am very specific about the players, their instruments and how many. If it's electronic I need the most efficient way to get from concept to reality. I find it best to really only learn one new synth per project, and I vet the competition mercilessly, afterall, it's my music at stake, it's me who has to decide between composing time versus sound creation time, and trust me, with a 100 million Dollar budget and a non - movable deadline, you need something like Zebra that not only inspires by sounding unquestionably great, but let's you get results quickly because the logic of the user interface makes it a joy to use.

I had nearly given up on soft synth. I mean, I have them all. Of couse I girate towards the ones that are clones of hardware versions of my Moogs and Prophets. Here's the funny thing, though. It takes as long to make a good patch on those then it takes on the real thing. Put them side by side, and you realize the the soft version is a pale comparison sonically. So why would I bother? And anyway, for all their gorgeous sounds, the old stuff is limiting, non programmable, temperamental and unreliable. And it doesn't really fit into our digital world anymore. But the Zebra is for me the way forward. However long I work on a patch - I never get that sense of frustration I get with the other stuff. I know the sound might not be right yet because I havn't spend enough time on it, but I know that the underlying quality is always there. In other words, you did good, Urs, Thanks a lot!

Regards
HZ

p.s I could really, really do with a program change implementation....please?"

Thanks to you too! - Program changes are in now, and we will cover the full story (including Howard Scarr's role) soon in more detail, on the u-he website!

Party Zone!

As every year, this MusikMesse is accompanied by numerous parties. If you know of a party and want to bring some extra VIPs, simply drop 4 entrance tickets at the u-he booth, Hall 5.1 Stand A75. No promise that we can make it, but there's a good chance we bring some more VIPs if you drop more tickets! We also appreciate drink vouchers where applicable.

Patch designer of the year

Howard Scarr is patch designer of the year, as was decided unanimously by u-he. Not only has he delivered a terrific set of factory patches, he's also done well with the Zebra Science collection and with his work for Hans Zimmer on the new Batman movie:

Hans Zimmer (l) with Howard Scarr (r)

Employee of the week

George Bezerianos is the latest employee of the week at u-he in Berlin. Not only does he code the craziest math stuff, he can also look quite scary - which is why he additionally doubles as a bodyguard! Really!!!

Kid uses warez, faces melting user interface

Audionews: Some kid going by the slightly obscure name of "devet3" has installed a keygenned version of Zebra V2.2 and instantly experienced its editor fading to black. It's still in the air and happens frequently...

Release of the month

YOU PRETTY THING: TUNE IN

Jayney Klimek (The Other Ones, Tangerine Dream, Tony Banks) and Blacky Schwarz-Rusczcynski (The Other Ones, UKW, Alphaville) release their debut album as You Pretty Thing in March 2008.
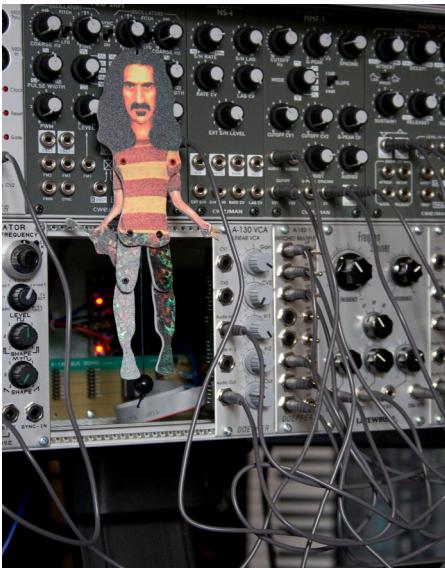
This is great music with a couple of Zebras here and there. The tunes are very catchy, somewhere in-between Rock and Pop with a little pinch of Fun Punk. Every now and then a bit of "Another Holiday" from The Other Ones comes to ones mind - no wonder as Jayney's voice is still the same! U-HE says: "Don't miss out on it!!!"

http://www.youprettythingmusic.com

Rumour section

Unconfirmed sources report that u-he have fallen in love with an analogue modular system (see picture on the right), based on high class components. This would add some serious spaghetti to the dev studio.

Some less reliable people go as far as to say that there is a fully modular software synthesizer in the works, dubbed "Berlin Modular", working every signal at full audio rate.

Other rumours point to the possibility of a u-he branded multiband distortion plugin based on an old classic called "TriDirt". This sounds like a reasonably educated guess, as the developer of TriDirt now works for u-he. How about "TriDirt Mk2"?!?

Plugin format of the season

Digidesign's own native plugin format, **RTAS** is the plugin format of the season. Which means that folks at u-he have indeed started to work this out. No official dates yet, but prototypes are expected to be rolled out for testing within Q2 2008.